Leading at Rice and Beyond
COLL 132
Spring 2014

Instructor:
Christian Neal
Lovett College
ctn1@rice.edu
832-646-8150

Course Location:
Lovett College PDR

Course Time:
Thursdays, 8-9 pm

Students:
Freshmen and Sophomores

Description: Rice University's mission statement emphasizes the importance of "producing leaders across the spectrum of the human endeavor,"[1] and accordingly offers ample opportunity for student self-governance and service-based learning. Yet students who take on these leadership roles often have little training and must learn primarily through trial and error. "Leading at Rice and Beyond" will be an effort to redress this, helping students to learn to network, leverage personal strengths, communicate effectively, and manage peer conflicts. Through assigned readings and practicum assignments, and with the inspiration of outside speakers, students will develop their own leadership style in a safe environment, becoming prepared to take on and thrive in future leadership positions not just at Rice but throughout their lives.

Course Objectives: By the end of the course, each student will

1. Become inspired by both the challenges and opportunities that leadership offers
2. Develop the leadership confidence that comes from specific knowledge
3. Hone his or her own leadership style while becoming aware of other approaches
4. Understand how his or her leadership skills can translate into professional settings
5. Network with other students, faculty, and community members who are interested in leadership

Weekly Expectations:

1. Students will come prepared each week with thoughts on a reading assignment.

2. Students will write one paragraph about the reading assignment each week, and submit this by noon on Wednesdays to ctn1@rice.edu
3. Students will also complete a practicum each week assigned by the instructor.
4. Along with their paragraph on the reading each week, students will write a paragraph about the practicum from the previous week.

Grading: Students will receive a passing grade if they:

1. Attend at least 12 classes.
2. Complete 10 each of the written and practicum assignments.
3. Actively participate in classroom discussions and activities.
4. Complete a final oral presentation on what they have learned in the class.

Course Schedule:

1. 1/16: Defining Leadership

Leadership is an illusive term. Most students feel that leadership requires charisma and an extroverted personality. New research, however, shows that 70% of CEOs describe themselves as introverts, including Warren Buffet, Steven Spielberg, and Bill Gates.[2] This class will allow students to understand leadership in more complex and nuanced ways.
Reading Assignment: "'What is Leadership?" by Max Depree, Chapter 2 of *Leadership is an Art*
Written Assignment: What is your definition of leadership? (one paragraph minimum)
Practicum Assignment: Attend a meeting or a colloquium and comment on the kind of leadership taking place.

2. 1/23: Balancing Stress and Broader Commitments

Leadership roles can be stressful on students no matter how capable they are academically and professionally. Leaders who take care of their own personal wellbeing will be much better equipped to serve in their leadership roles successfully. This class will discuss ways that student leaders can lead healthy and well-balanced lives to avoid stress and burnout.
Special Guest: Peter Abraham, Former McMurtry College President, 2014 (unconfirmed)
Reading Assignment: "The Stress of Leadership" by Michael Campbell, et al, from the *Center for Creative Leadership*
Written Assignment: What ways can you avoid the stress of leadership?
Practicum Assignment: Try out three stress relieving techniques this week.

3. 1/30: Discovering and Developing Personal Leadership Strengths

The movie *Rudy* is the quintessential underdog story of a 5'6", 165 pound walk-on football player at Notre Dame who works hard to play just once, sacking the opposing quarterback to lead his team to victory. Very inspiring! But what if Rudy had spent the hours and hours of football practice on something for which he was more thoroughly talented? Building on one's strengths is far more useful

than fixing one's weaknesses. During this class, we will discuss what each student's personal strengths are and how to apply them in leadership settings.

Reading Assignment: Use the personal access code provided in class to take Gallup's Strength Finder 2.0 and then read the accompanying material with each strength. Enter your top five strengths into this Google Spreadsheet.

Written assignment: Do you agree with the Strength Finder's outline of your personal strengths? (one paragraph)

Practicum Assignment: Leverage one of your strengths in any situation involving peers and explain how you learned more about that specific strength from the experience.

4. **2/6: Fine Tuning Process and Legitimacy**

Good decisions without good process can often times leave leaders without any followers behind them. Engaging with constituencies in a consistent and fair manner will ensure that not only the best decision is made but that the decision is effective in its implementation. Leaders are not necessarily decision makers but are decision facilitators who engage with active followers. This class will explore legitimacy and process in leadership by using Rice's Vision for the 2nd Century as a case study.

Reading Assignment: None. In-class exercise only.

Written Assignment: None.

Practicum Assignment: Identify a change that is occurring within your college or organization. Is the process to change this issue a great one?

5. **2/13: Communicating Effectively**

The 21st century is filled with a potpourri of communication options from Tweets to Facebook posts to email. Our generation has been called the most adept at communicating[3] but often times we can forget about the importance of interpersonal communication. With all the different types of communication available, we need to clarify the differences between writing emails, making a presentation, and speaking extemporaneously at a meeting or forum. This class will discuss a wide range of issues related to communicating effectively.

Reading Assignment: "Communication: The Key to Implementing Your Agenda" by Thomas J. Neff & James M. Citrin, Chapter 7 from *You're in Charge-Now What?*

Written Assignment: How can we apply Neff and Citrin's communication advice on a college campus?

Practicum Assignment: Identify your weakest and best forms of communication. Make an effort to improve both this week.

6. **2/20: Distinguishing Between Management and Leadership**

Many students would argue that a difference between management and leadership exists; many claim just to know the difference. However, we often times interchangeably use the words manager and leader. What makes this distinction? Does it actually exist? Can managers be leaders? Vice versa? This class will answer all of these questions and develop a strong a distinction between management and leadership.

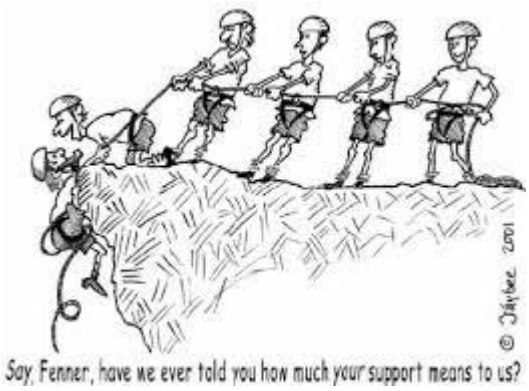
Special Guest: Caroline Guiterrez, Hanszen College President, 2014
Reading Assignment: "Leadership versus Management: How They Are Different and Why?" by Shamas-ur-Rehman Toor and George Ofori, from *Leadership and Management in Engineering* April 2008
Written Assignment: Which do you value more, management or leadership?
Practicum Assignment: Ask the top leader in your organization or college how much time he or she spends on management rather than leadership.

7. **2/27: Networking and Building Connections**

Networking would probably bring three words to students' minds: scary, scam, and selfish. We all too often see networking as just an opportunity to receive rather than to give. The better way to approach this sometimes scary concept is to look at networking as an opportunity to build relationships. Like any relationship, each person's needs should be in harmony with one another, with each side giving and receiving. This class will focus ways students can build new relationships at Rice and in a professional setting.
Reading Assignment: "The 10 Secrets of a Master Networker" by Tahl Raz, *Inc.* January 2003
Written Assignment: Do any of Keith Ferrazzi's "Rules" resonate with you? Why?
Practicum Assignment: Meet and write one or two sentences about five new people you meet around campus this week. At least one must come from each of these three categories: students, faculty, and staff.

3/4: SPRING BREAK

8. **3/13: Facilitating Positive Group Dynamics**



A group of individuals with a wide variety of skills, talents, opinions, and passions do not simply become a team overnight. Leaders must take the initiative to facilitate positive group dynamics so that their organization becomes more unified towards a common goal. Building this team atmosphere is often times left out of leadership discussions, but a leader will inevitably fail without a strong team supporting him or her. This class will explore ways to foster strong teams in any type of organization.
Special Guest: Jenny Sun, Former Student Director of Orientation Week, Baker 2012 (unconfirmed)
Reading Assignment: "6 Ways Successful Teams Are Built to Last" by Glenn Llopis from *Forbes*; and "Ten Qualities of an Effective Team" by Marty Brounstein from *Managing Teams for Dummies*
Written Assignment: What tips does Lee provide on how to move from group to team?
Practicum Assignment: Look for ways that your college or organization fosters team building. Comment on ways to improve these activities.

9. **3/20: Resolving Conflicts**

"The quality of our lives depends not on whether or not we have conflicts, but on how we respond to them." – Tom Crum

Throughout our lives, Leaders are often called upon to arbitrate disputes between two people or factions within their organization. A true leader will be able to understand both sides and arbitrate effectively. During this class, we will discuss ways to resolve conflicts, focusing specifically on peer conflicts.

Reading Assignment: "Don't Bargain Over Positions" by Roger Fisher and William Ury, Chapter 1 of *Getting to Yes*

Written Assignment: Discuss a time you witnessed a negotiator use both of the techniques discussed in the reading.

Practicum Assignment: Find a peer conflict that you can resolve using the techniques discussed in class.

3/27: NO CLASS, WILLY WEEK

10. 4/3: Running an Effective Meeting or Forum

Any leadership position will fill your schedule with meetings upon meetings upon meetings. People easily get bogged down in these meetings when they are not run effectively. How do you actually set an agenda? How do you make sure that no one person dominates the floor? How do you ensure that everyone voices their concerns and opinions about agenda items? We will answer all these questions and more in our

Reading Assignment: "How to Organize and Run Effective Meetings" by Marlene K. Rebori from the University of Nevada at Reno, "How to Run a Meeting Like Google" by Carmine Gallo from *BloombergBusinessweek*, and "Running an Effective Meeting" by the Center for Campus Involvement at the University of Michigan

Written Assignment: Describe the perfect meeting.

Practicum Assignment: Observe your weekly college or organization meeting and comment on how well they follow your idea of a perfect meeting.

11. 4/10: Inspiring Creativity

Often times, students think that the world includes two different kinds of people: creative-artsy types and practical types. This class will seek to break that myth and to empower students in their creative confidence. We will also discuss the

Written Assignment: What ways do you see student leaders utilizing these five bases of power?

Practicum Assignment: Look for a way to exert influence at your club or within your college.

12. 4/17: Transitioning Into a New Role

Most student leadership roles are less than a year. By the time Millenials turn 35, they are expected to have held 10 different jobs.[4] With all of these different roles coming up in both your time at Rice and your career, transitioning will need to be a process that students pay attention to closely. The first several weeks in a new position are critical to getting quick and easy wins that will build repertoire and social capital for the future. This class will explore ways that students can effectively transition out of and into new leadership roles both at Rice and in the professional world.

Special Guest: Helene Dick, Former General Manager of Willy's Pub, Martel 2014
Reading Assignment: "Resisting Temptation: Avoiding the Top Ten Traps for New Leaders" by Thomas J. Neff & James M. Citrin, Chapter 8 from *You're in Charge—Now What?*
Written Assignment: Describe a time when you or someone you know fell into one of these traps when transitioning into a new position.
Practicum Assignment: Ask two officers within your organization or college about how their leadership transition process worked.

13. 4/22: Final Presentations

The final class will serve as a reflection point for students to analyze all the different skills they have learned throughout the semester. Students will divide up into teams to re-teach the course during this final night. Individual presentations of key points from each class period should be between two and three minutes.

Honor Code:

Students are expected to abide by the Rice University Honor Code as described in the Honor System Handbook at http://honor.rice.edu/honor-system-handbook/. For weekly written assignments and the final presentation you are welcome to discuss your ideas with others before writing, but you should cite all your sources and the work you turn in must be original. All direct and indirect quotations from other sources should be properly acknowledged. Please include complete citations using the style of your choice (APA, MLA, Chicago/Turabian) for quotations and references made in the body of a text.

Students with Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti–discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. *If you have a documented disability, please contact me during the first two weeks of this course to discuss your needs.* Additionally, you will need to register with the Disability Support Services Office in the Allen Center. Visit www.dss.rice.edu for more information about services on campus for persons with disabilities.

Citations

1. Rice University. 2010. "Mission Statement for Rice University." Accessed February 4, 2013. http://professor.rice.edu/professor/Mission_Statement.asp

2. Burgis, Neal. 2012. "Successful Introverted CEOs." *Business Expert Webinars*. Accessed January 22, 2013. http://www.businessexpertwebinars.com/content/view/369/29/

3. Hadfield, Barrie. 2012. "5 Ways Gen Y is Changing Your Business, Like It or Not." *Forbes*. February 26. Accessed February 10, 2013. http://www.forbes.com/sites/ciocentral/2012/02/26/5-ways-gen-y-is-changing-your-business-like-it-or-not/

4. McCarron, Kathy. 2012. "Millenials, Gen Y, Gen X—Can't we all get along?" *Tire Business*. November 30. Accessed February 14, 2013. http://www.tirebusiness.com/article/20121130/NEWS/121139990/millennials-gen-y-gen-x-cant-we-all-get-along